

Admiral MOORER. Mr. Chairman, I will have to pass that to the State Department, because that is a policy question which I do not get involved in.

Question: Why we supported Sihanouk's overthrow when he was out of the country?

Answer: The United States had absolutely nothing to do with the overthrow of Sihanouk in 1970. We had renewed relations with Cambodia at Sihanouk's request in mid-1969 and were quite satisfied with the progress of our relations. We, therefore, had no reason to encourage or to support his deposition which was carried out by legal means.

Question: "and when that overthrow appeared to be failing, I don't understand why we invaded his country on the ground as well as bombing in the air."

Answer: The brief incursion by United States ground forces in 1970 was directly connected with the withdrawal of US forces from South Vietnam. It was designed to destroy North Vietnamese and Viet Cong base areas and armed caches, thereby protecting the rear of our forces as they began their withdrawal. Bombing was used to support this effort and was then continued in an effort to interdict supply routes by which more weapons came to South Vietnam via Laos and Cambodia. Our air support was also directed, in part, over the last two years in support of Cambodian forces at the request of the Government of the Khmer Republic in its efforts toward legitimate self-defense as permitted by the UN Charter.